

Message Text

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15

ACTION AF-06

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FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2384

INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY LUANDA

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E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, PFOR, WA, AO

SUBJECT: NAMIBIA: REPORTS OF SWAPO-UNITA SPLIT

REFERENCE: PRETORIA 2715

1. REPORTS APPEARING IN SOUTH AFRICAN PRESS JULY 31 ALLEGE THAT RECENT ARREST OF SEVERAL NAMIBIANS IN ANGOLA BY UNITA FORCES (REFTEL) DUE TO SPLIT BETWEEN SWAPO AND UNITA. STORY ATTRIBUTED TO UNNAMED SOURCES IN WINDHOEK STATES THAT UNITA ACTION WAS RETALIATION FOR DETENTION BY SWAPO MEMBERS OF UNITA LEADER IN SOUTHERN ANGOLA, DR. VAKULUKUTA, WHO WAS LATER RELEASED.

2. REPORT CLAIMS SWAPO NOW HAS JOINTED FORCES WITH MPLA AFTER BREAKING TIES WITH UNITA "BECAUSE OF ITS RELATIVELY MODERATE AND PEACE-LOVING ATTITUDE." VERSION IN AFRIKAANS PRESS STATES THAT REFUGEES ENTERING NAMIBIA FROM SOUTHERN ANGOLA HAVE SEEN SWAPO MEMBERS JOINING

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MPLA FORCES, WHICH STORY DESCRIBES AS "ARMED TO THE TEETH

WITH RUSSIAN WEAPONS".

3. COMMENT: NEITHER ENGLISH-LANGUAGE NOR AFRIKAANS PRESS IDENTIFIES WINDHOEK SOURCE OF STORY ON SWAPO-UNITA SPLIT. WHILE THERE HAVE BEEN INDICATIONS OF WEAKENING TIES WHICH APPARENTLY ONCE WERE FAIRLY STRONG BETWEEN THE TWO GROUPS, THIS IS FIRST REPORT OF ACTUAL BREAK WITH UNITA IN FAVOR OF MPLA. WHILE REPORT MAY VERY WELL BE TRUE, POSSIBILITY ALSO EXISTS THAT IT IS PART OF ON-GOING SOUTH AFRICAN EFFORT TO DISCREDIT SWAPO BY LINKING IT WITH MILITANTLY MARXIST MPLA.
BOWDLER

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